

THE EDGE

**THIS
ISSUE**

Trailblazing Your
College Journey



CRAVING STARBUCKS?

Turn to page 7 to find out
how to win a **FREE** Starbucks gift card!

UCI School of Education

WELCOME



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One of the best things about a journey is preparing for it.

Envisioning the activities I'll enjoy, the foods I might taste and the final destination are exciting. With experience, I've learned that planning the details before I leave can be critical to the success of my trip.

Your decision to pursue a college education may be filled with the same anticipation, imagining the fun and growth ahead as you follow your dreams. At the same time, you may have questions about the many options offered to you. It may even be a little overwhelming to think that decisions you make about these opportunities could make a difference in your college achievements—and set the foundation for reaching your goals in life.

That's why Orange County United Way is pleased to again collaborate with the University of California, Irvine on this edition of *The Edge*. It's a valuable guidebook, filled with information and insights you can use to design your college journey and navigate your choices. Its goal is to help you plan the details of your unique journey to success.

Likewise, helping people is what Orange County United Way is all about. We're Doing More today than ever before to make sure students in our community have the skills and support they need. For example, our Destination Graduation program provides mentoring, tutoring and beyond-the-classroom learning at 20 Orange County high schools and middle schools. It's helping more students graduate and enroll in college! What's more, our Youth Career Connections summer internships give high schoolers real-world experience in workplaces across the county, including at UCI Health. The interns get to explore their passions, expand their talents and abilities, and maybe meet a future employer.

These programs are just a few of United Way's initiatives that fight for the education, health, housing and financial stability of every person in Orange County. We help students graduate and prepare for career success. We provide access to healthy food and healthcare. We work to close the poverty gap. We provide access to stable housing to prevent future homelessness. By bringing together the best of our local resources, leaders, businesses and partners, we're Doing More to make a difference for everyone in our community—including you and me!

I hope you are eagerly anticipating the day you'll set off on your exciting college journey. Keep *The Edge* close by as a reference as you map your course and picture your possibilities. Orange County United Way wishes you every success!

Sincerely,

Susan B. Parks
President and CEO
Orange County United Way



UCI Center for Educational Partnerships



Dear student,
We are pleased to share the latest issue of *The Edge*! This issue of *The Edge* is designed for ALL students in high school who have the will and desire to turn their dreams of a successful and exciting future into reality. The path to the best jobs, a high quality of life and acquiring the skills necessary to give back to your community is clear: you need a college education.

Most students know how important college is, but are overwhelmed by which educational route to choose, how to get there, and how to pay for it. Don't worry, the Center for Educational Partnerships and the School of Education at the University of California, Irvine are here to support you. Over the past two decades, we've helped thousands of students achieve their educational goals.

The following pages will walk you through some of the choices and requirements for college admission and financial aid that otherwise might be confusing. Inside, you will even find advice for your parents, who likely have their own questions about how they can best support you.

Whether you are a freshman or senior, it is never too early or too late to become better informed about your options and the support that is available to help you pursue your dreams. Knowledge is power, but you need to take the first step by taking the time to read through these pages and making sure that your critical questions are answered. Don't be a victim of mistaken assumptions about who can and cannot go to college, especially when it comes to finances. Do you know about the University of California's Blue and Gold Plan? If you think money can stop you from going to college, you need the

information found inside of *The Edge*. Continue on for all the details, and we'll see you on campus.

Sincerely,

Richard Arum, Ph.D.
Dean, School of Education,
University of California, Irvine

Stephanie Reyes-Tuccio, Ph.D.
Assistant Vice Chancellor Educational
Partnerships, University of California, Irvine

UNDERSTANDING THE A - G REQUIREMENTS

by Julie Lindo, Assistant Director, Upward Bound, UC Irvine

A common misconception is that college preparation begins during junior year when students register for exams such as the SAT and ACT.

On the contrary, preparation for a university education begins as early as when students decide which courses to take in high school. The courses they take early in their high school years will help set their goals and create an academic plan to attend a four-year university.

A key component in that academic plan is fulfilling the A-G requirements. The A-G courses include a variety of subjects that ensure students receive a general knowledge base and a foundation to become academically college-ready for advanced studies.

These courses must be completed with a letter grade of "C" or better and include a minimum number of

years in each category. The minimum year requirement varies based on the subject and is shown below:

- (A) 2 years of **History/Social Science**
- (B) 4 years of **English**
- (C) 3 years of **Mathematics**
- (D) 2 years of **Laboratory Science**
- (E) 2 years of a **Language other than English**
- (F) 1 year of **Visual and Performing Arts**
- (G) 1 year of a **College-Preparatory Elective**

Completing the minimum number of years allows the student to become eligible to apply to both UCs and CSUs. However, to become a more competitive applicant for the UC and CSU system, it is essential that you complete more than the minimum required years.

For a student to stand out and be a competitive applicant, the student must go beyond the minimally required A-G coursework. It is recommended that students complete more than 15 courses; specifically, an additional year of math, laboratory science, and foreign language. The full list of recommended courses is shown below:

- (A) History/Social Science - **2 years recommended**
- (B) English - **4 years recommended**
- (C) Mathematics - **4 years recommended**
- (D) Laboratory Science - **3 years recommended**
- (E) Language other than English - **3 years recommended**
- (F) Visual and Performing Arts - **1 year recommended**
- (G) College-Preparatory Elective - **1 year recommended**

CATEGORY	NAME	REQUIRED	RECOMMENDED
A	History/Social Science	2 years	2 years
B	Language of Instruction (English)	4 years	4 years
C	Mathematics	3 years	4 years
D	Laboratory Science	2 years	3 years
E	Language other than English	2 years	3-4 years
F	Visual and Performing Arts	1 year	1 year
G	College-Preparatory Elective	1 year	1 year

WHICH PATH ARE YOU ON?

by Kandance Aragon, Program Coordinator, EAOP, UC Irvine

In addition to completing extra courses, students should also challenge themselves by taking AP, IB, or Honor courses to enhance their course portfolio. Sometimes high schools do not offer the higher level courses. In these cases, students should look to take courses at a local community college. The extra year of courses and taking college-level courses are challenging and require extra effort. Successfully taking these courses shows universities that you are a student committed to their academics.

It is important to note that high school graduation requirements differ from the requirements to apply to a four-year university. A student could be on track to graduate with a high school diploma but still be ineligible to apply to the CSU and UC system unless they satisfy the A-G requirements.

This is because many California high schools have graduation requirements that do not align with the A-G requirements in order to graduate with a high school diploma. High school graduation requirements can vary by school district, but common graduation requirements include passing courses with a grade of "D" or better, different years required in math, science, a language other than English and/or visual and performing arts, and completing courses that are that are not A-G approved.

Students can check the A-G Course List websites of the UC and CSU systems to find which courses at their high school are approved A-G courses. See page 19 for the link for both websites.

Competitive applicants start planning early, are resourceful, communicative of their plans, and are willing to go beyond minimum requirements as they follow their educational path into the university system. There's a good chance that if you are reading this magazine, you are one of those competitive applicants.

Every student's college path is different, however, that doesn't mean that college is only for a specific group of students. All students have the option to pursue higher education.

Which college or university you are eligible to apply/attend depends on your overall academic profile.

Some students are set to apply to a range of universities like the University of California (UC) system and the California State University (CSU) system whereas community college is the best option for others.

Here are three examples of high school students in their senior year trying to find the best path to a college degree:

STUDENT 1:

GPA: 2.1

SAT Score: 850

Completed "A-G"

requirements: No

On track to graduate: Yes

With a GPA above 2.0, this student meets the minimum GPA requirement for the CSU system. However, not completing the A-G requirements makes them ineligible to apply. The best option for this student is to attend a community college. The community college route can open many pathways and has no limits. This student has the option to pursue a vocational license, a certificate, or to receive an Associate of Arts/Science degree. Another option for the student is to take the required courses and transfer to a four-year university. The community college could also be the most inexpensive route for this student. The average cost is \$46 a unit, and it typically takes a student two to three years to transfer to a four-year university. For more information on how to successfully navigate through community college, see the article on page 17.



(continued next page)

STUDENT 2:

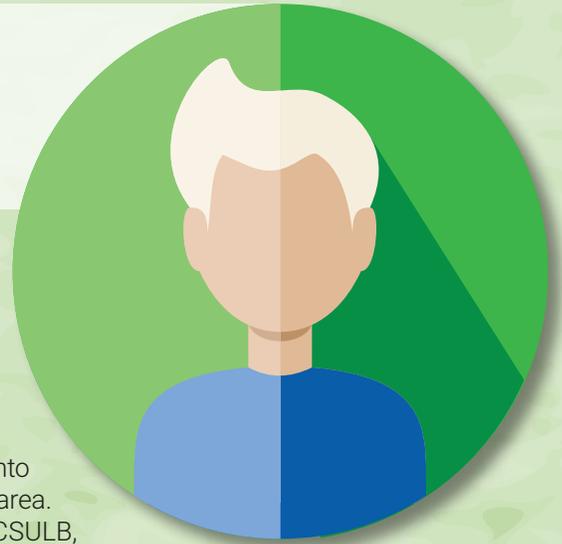
GPA: 2.8

SAT Score: 1,000

Completed "A-G" requirements: Yes

On track to graduate: Yes

This student meets the requirements to apply to the CSU system. They are competitive for most campuses and their eligibility index is above the required 2,950. Eligibility index is a tool used by CSUs to determine if a student is eligible to apply, if a student has a 2,950 or above, they qualify for most CSUs. For more information regarding how the eligibility index is determined visit www2.calstate.edu/apply/eligibility-index. Some schools like, CSU Long Beach, have a higher eligibility index because it is a very competitive school. This student can apply to whatever CSU they desire, but it is important to look into their local schools. The CSU gives priority to those within their local admission area. For example, a student who lives in Compton is in the local admission area for CSULB, CSUDH, and CSULA. This student would have priority consideration for admission at these universities. This opens up the doors for this student to be admitted to a CSU.



STUDENT 3:

GPA: 3.8

SAT Score: 1,350

Completed "A-G" requirements: Yes

On track to graduate: Yes

This student meets the requirements to apply to both UC and CSU. It would be best for the student to apply to both institutions. The student is very competitive for all CSUs and they have strong grades and test scores for the UC system. However, UC admissions are based on more than just grades and test scores. They emphasize the importance of being a well-rounded student. Meaning, are students involved in extracurricular activities? Are they volunteering? Are they receiving any honors and awards? Are they a part of any educational preparation programs? Besides their involvement in activities outside of the classroom, it is important to highlight that a key component of the UC application is the Personal Insight Questions (PIQs) section. PIQs are a chance for you to really advocate for yourself. They are one of the most critical aspects of the UC Application. The PIQs are a section for you to highlight all that you have done throughout high school and beyond what has been shared in other parts of the application. For tips on how to prepare for the PIQs, read the article on page 14.



Regardless of their academic profile, all three students have options to attend a college or university. While their paths may not be identical, each have the opportunity to receive a degree from a university in their own way. There are over 114 Community Colleges, 23 CSUs and 9 UCs, and many private schools within the state of California for students to choose from! So take some time to evaluate where you are eligible to apply and start mapping out your college path.

COLLEGE APPLICATION COMPARISON

by Ashley Cheri, Director, EAOP, UC Irvine

	UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA	CAL STATE UNIVERSITY	COMMON APPLICATION	COMMUNITY COLLEGE
WEBSITE	<i>universityofcalifornia.edu/apply</i>	<i>calstate.edu/apply</i>	<i>commonapp.org</i>	<i>cccapply.org</i>
APPLICATION	1 application for all campuses (9 campuses open to freshmen)	1 application for EACH campus (23 campuses open to freshmen)	1 application for EACH campus (800+ campuses open to freshmen)	1 application for EACH campus (113 campuses)
APPLICATION SUBMISSION PERIOD	November 1st-November 30th (Application opens August 1)	October 1st-November 30th	Varies by college	You may submit an application at any time (deadline for enrollment in the upcoming term varies by college)
COST	\$70.00 per campus (fee waivers available)	\$55.00 per campus (fee waivers available)	Varies by college	Free
FEE WAIVERS	Waiver to 4 campuses (if eligible, apply online within UC application)	Waiver to 4 campuses (if eligible, apply online within CSU application)	Waivers for 4 campuses will be awarded online through College Board, if eligible. Student must have taken at least one SAT or SAT Subject Test with a fee waiver, or an SAT that was paid for by his or her state or school district. Note that only fee waiver users who actually take a test will receive the online College Application Fee Waiver	Not applicable
ENTRANCE EXAMS	REQUIRED: SAT with Essay or the ACT with Writing RECOMMENDED: 2 SAT Subject Tests from 2 different disciplines	SAT with Essay or the ACT	Varies by college (report highest individual scores per section)	No exam needed for admission.
TRANSCRIPTS	Not Required (Self-Reported Grades)	Not Required (Self-Reported Grades)	Not Required (Self-Reported Grades)	Not required ; but may be needed to determine English and Math placement
ESSAY REQUIREMENT	Personal Insight Questions: Applicant must answer 4 out of 8 questions. (see article on page 14)	Not required	Short Answer and Personal Essay on your topic of choice	Not required
RECOMMENDATIONS	UCB applicants may be invited to submit 2 letters of recommendation. For further information please visit their website: <i>www.admissions.berkeley.edu/freshmanpolicy</i>	Not required	Varies by college (supplemental forms available on the application)	Not required
ACTIVITIES AND AWARDS	UC wants to learn about your honors and awards, volunteer work/ community service, extracurricular activities, coursework other than A-G, educational preparation programs, and employment	Not required	Colleges want to learn about your honors and awards, volunteer work/ community service, extracurricular activities, educational preparation programs, and employment (may also attach a resumé)	Not required
EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM (EOP)	Included in the application	Included in the application	Separate application (check each individual school)	Separate application with the EOPS program at each college
GPA MINIMUM	3.0 in A-G courses taken during 10th-11th grades (must finish 11/15 courses by the end of 11th grade)	2.0 minimum in A-G courses taken during 10th-11th grades	Varies by college	No GPA requirement. You must be 18 years or older, or have one of the following: a high school diploma, GED, or equivalent



STARBUCKS GIFT CARD GIVE-AWAY!

Go to www.cfep.uci.edu/theedge/survey to find out how.
Offer ends December 31, 2018



2018-19 COLLEGE TIMELINE

by Cesar Beccera, Executive Assistant, Center for Educational Partnerships, UC Irvine

 Indicates Transfer Deadlines



- August 1st:** UC Application opens for Fall 2019 at www.universityofcalifornia.edu/apply

AUGUST

- October 1st-November 30th:** Filing Period for CSU Application.
- October 1st-31st:** UC Spring quarter application filing period.
- Visit potential campuses and participate in college fairs at school and/or school district.
- October 1st:** Filing period for FAFSA and Cal Grant Verification Form opens.
- October 1st:** California Dream Act Application open!
- October 5th:** Registration deadline for the November 3rd, 2018 SAT Test date.
- Begin preparing for the Personal Insight Questions!
- Search and apply for available scholarships!

OCTOBER

DECEMBER

SEPTEMBER

- September 1st-30th:** UC Transfer Admission Guarantee (TAG) filing period for Fall 2019 admissions www.uctap.universityofcalifornia.edu/students/index.cfm

- September 7th:** Registration deadline for the October 6th, 2018 SAT Test Date and SAT Subject Test (Taking 2 subject tests is recommended if you plan to apply to a UC, private, or out-of-state school).

- September 28th:** Registration deadline for October 27th, 2018 ACT Test (don't forget to add the writing section).

- Create a list of universities you plan to apply to and participate in college fairs at school and/or school district.

- Search and apply for available scholarships!

NOVEMBER

- November 1st-30th:** Filing Period for UC Application.
- November 2nd:** Registration deadline for December 1st, 2018 SAT Test date.
- November 2nd:** Registration deadline for December 8th, 2018 ACT Test date.
- November 30th:** LAST day to complete and submit your UC/CSU application.

JANUARY

- January 4th:** Application updates open for transfer applicants to report final fall grades and planned coursework (priority deadline Jan. 31).
- Ask your counselor about the GPA Verification Form for Cal Grants and make sure it gets sent.
- Continue to search and apply for scholarships as well as other types of financial aid.

WELCOME

TO

COLLEGE

- Visit Campus Open Houses, participate in stay-over programs if applicable and start finalizing your decision about which campus you will attend.
- Maintain academic GPA. Remember, you must pass all courses with a "C" or better to keep your admissions to all universities.

- Continue to visit colleges you applied to so you're ready to make a decision when admission letters start coming in next month.

FEBRUARY

APRIL

- June 1st:** Deadline for admitted transfer students to submit SIR to UCs.
- June 1st:** Deadline for admitted transfer students to complete application for guaranteed Housing. Will receive housing offer by mid-June.
- Send official transcripts from your high school to the university you plan to enroll in the Fall.

MARCH

MAY

JUNE

JULY

- March 1st:** All your hard work is about to pay off! Notification of Fall 2019 admissions decisions begin.

- March 1st:** UC Housing Application opens, may be completed upon admission.

- March 2nd:** FAFSA, California Dream Act Application DUE for priority consideration of financial aid.

- March 2nd:** Deadline to submit GPA Verification Form to be eligible for Cal Grants.

- March 31st:** Notification of Fall 2019 admissions decisions for freshman applicants is complete.

- May 1st:** Deadline for admitted freshman to submit Statement of Intent to Register (SIR) to UC/CSU campuses. This is your LAST CHANCE to submit your final selection to attend one campus.

- May 1st:** Notification for Fall 2019 admission decisions for transfer applicants is complete.

- May 1st:** Deadline for admitted freshman students to complete application for guaranteed Housing.

- Take Analytical Writing Placement Exam (AWPE) test for UC Incoming Freshmen.

- Reminder for AP Exams: Make sure to take the AP exams listed on your college applications.

- Request official transcripts from your high school registrar and make sure they are sent to the university you plan to enroll in the Fall.

- July 1st:** Deadline to submit final official transcripts to UC campuses.

- July 15th:** Deadline to submit all other documents and exam (AP, IB exam) scores to UC Campuses.

FINANCIAL AID APPLICATION: FUNDING YOUR FUTURE

by Jamal Collins, *Financial Aid Outreach and Communications Liaison, UC Office of the President*

All students who apply for admission to a college or university should also apply for financial aid. It takes most families less than an hour to complete and submit the application, and the payoff for completing the application can result in thousands of dollars in free money for school!

There are two applications for financial aid consideration for California students, but you will only complete one of them. The one that you will complete is based on your citizenship status:

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA): Complete this application if you are a U.S. citizen, permanent resident, or eligible non-citizen.

California Dream Act Application (CADAA): Complete this application if you are undocumented and meet AB-540 requirements.

Prepare to Apply!

FAFSA Filers

1. Gather needed documents
 - ▶ Social security cards for you and your parent (if applicable)
 - ▶ Driver's license number if you have one
 - ▶ Alien registration card if you are not a U.S. citizen
 - ▶ Federal tax returns and W2 information for you and your parent(s)
 - ▶ Information on untaxed income (e.g., workers' compensation, disability benefits, etc.)
 - ▶ Information on cash, savings, and checking accounts and investments

2. Create an FSA ID at fsaid.ed.gov

You and your parent will each need a FSA ID to sign the application electronically. Parents who are undocumented will not be able to obtain a FSA ID and will need to print the signature page at the end of the application and mail it to the address on the page.

3. Log on to fafsa.ed.gov to complete your application.

CADAA Filers

1. Gather needed documents – The same documents as FAFSA filers when applicable

2. Parent PIN – Parents should request a Parent PIN to sign the application electronically

3. Log on to <https://dream.csac.ca.gov/> to complete your application

What You Can Get!

Apply by **March 2, 2019**, to be considered for all federal, state, and university aid, such as:

Cal Grants – covers the cost of systemwide tuition and fees at UC (\$12,570 for 2018-19).

Federal Pell Grants – Eligible students are currently awarded up to \$6,095.

UC Grants – Awards vary based on institution, student eligibility, and student need.

UC Scholarships – Most scholarships offered at UC will have a need component and vary in award amounts. The application for UC Admissions doubles as your scholarship application.

The *UC Blue and Gold Opportunity Plan* ensures that families earning less than \$80,000 per year and who have financial need do not pay systemwide tuition and fees. UC utilizes a student's eligibility for the grants and scholarships listed above to keep this commitment.

Federal student loans and work-study are also available.



Need Help Applying?

Starting October 1, students and families can attend FREE Cash for College workshops throughout the state. These events are usually held in the evenings to allow parents to participate. Visit <https://www.cash4college.csac.ca.gov/> to find a location near you. These workshops will be scheduled up to the March 2nd deadline.

After You Have Applied?

Students may also receive information from federal and state agencies regarding estimated eligibility shortly after applying. Students who applied for admission to UC will receive a financial aid award notices that summarizes all their financial aid after they have been officially offered admissions.

COLLEGE IS FOR UNDOCUMENTED STUDENTS

by Oscar Teran, Director, DREAM Center, UC Irvine

As the Director of UC Irvine's Undocumented Student Resource Center, undocumented students often tell me that when they were in high school, they did not think college was for them.

Students tell me that staff in their high schools did not know how to advise them or, sometimes, even actively discouraged them from considering college. Some students share that because they could not complete the FAFSA they assumed they could not afford college. Other students say that anti-immigrant rhetoric in national politics and the attacks on DACA made them question if college was worth it. The important message I always share with these students is the same—college is for you and you belong here.

College is for Undocumented Students

Undocumented students are eligible to attend any institution of higher learning in California (California Community Colleges, California State Universities, the University of California, and private universities). There are several California state laws designed to make college accessible and affordable for undocumented individuals.

For example, AB540 is a California law that provides in-state tuition at public colleges to undocumented individuals who meet specific criteria. A student applies for AB540 at a public college where they will be enrolling.

The California Dream Act Helps Pay for College

Students eligible for AB540 automatically qualify for the California Dream Act, a separate but related law, which provides access to state financial aid.

Students apply for the California Dream Act by completing an online application with the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC). Graduating seniors should complete an application during their senior year. More information and a link to the application can be found on CSAC's website: <https://www.csac.ca.gov/california-dream-act>. The California Dream Act application opens on October 1st and must be submitted by May 2nd.

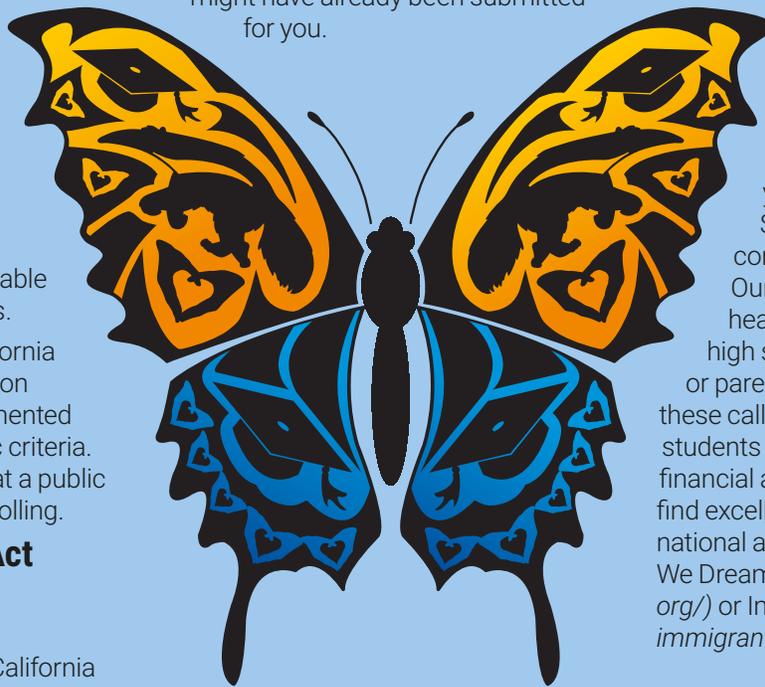
In addition to the California Dream Act application, undocumented students should submit a high school GPA verification to CSAC to be eligible for the Cal Grant, another source of financial aid. Cal Grant GPA submissions open on October 1st and have to be submitted by May 2nd (the same timeline as the California Dream Act application). Find more information about Cal Grant GPA verification at <https://www.csac.ca.gov/pod/cal-grant-gpa-information> and be sure to check with your school counselors to see if it might have already been submitted for you.

California Law is Separate from Federal Law

California state laws are independent from the federal DACA program and are not impacted by changes in federal law or by anti-immigrant rhetoric in national politics. Information provided to the State of California through an AB540 or California Dream Act application will NOT and CANNOT be shared with federal immigration authorities—undocumented applicants can be confident that these applications will not endanger them in any way. Also, students considering colleges outside of California should research the laws of the states where they plan to apply. Some states have laws similar to California, which may help make their public institutions more accessible for undocumented individuals.

We Are Here to Help

Navigating this information is challenging, but there are great resources available to help you. Inquire if any of the colleges you are applying to have Undocumented Student Resource Programs or Centers—many do. Once you find an Undocumented Student Resource Center contact them for assistance. Our Center at UC Irvine often hears from prospective students, high school guidance counselors, or parents. We are happy to take these calls and help prospective students navigate the admissions and financial aid process. You can also find excellent resources online through national advocacy groups like United We Dream (<https://unitedwedream.org/>) or Immigrants Rising (<https://immigrantsrising.org/>).



UCI DREAM Center

SCHOLARSHIPS: A COLLEGE STUDENT'S BEST FRIEND

by Kuni Kondo, Scholarship Coordinator, Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships, UC Irvine

Finding scholarships can seem like a daunting task, but with a little time and effort, you will see that there are plenty of opportunities out there.

Many organizations provide scholarships for almost any category you can imagine! Scholarships are available for categories such as financial need, educational interests, hobbies, how you identify, sports you participate in, etc. So the good news is, you don't have to be a perfect straight-A student to receive a scholarship. Here are a few tips to help you with your scholarship search.

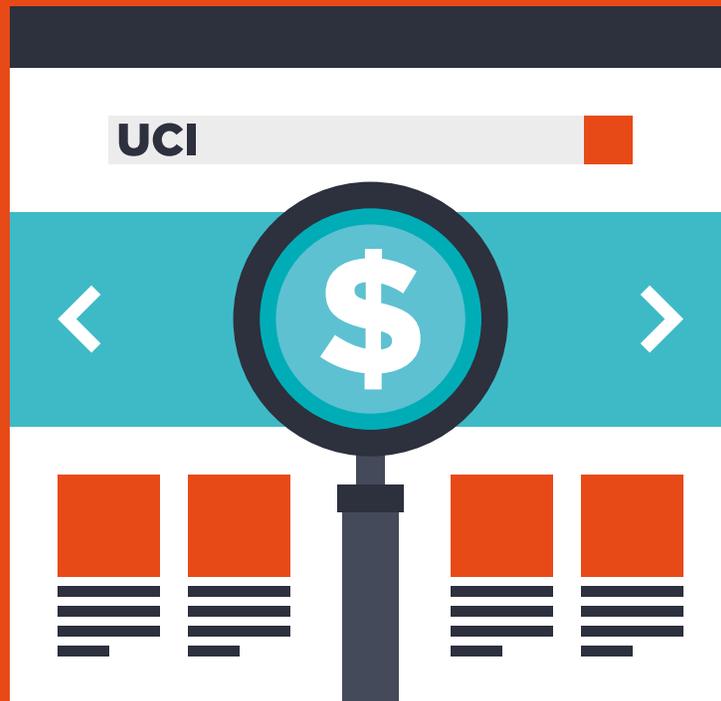
Begin the process early and stay organized

It is essential to get started early. Many opportunities will open up during this academic year for scholarships that will be given to students next year. It helps to organize the scholarships you are applying for by deadline, requirements, and award amounts, so you know exactly what you need to turn in to be eligible for the award.

Preparing for the requirements

Be sure to do your research so that you understand what the organization that is providing the award is all about. Keep in mind that each scholarship is different and each has their own set of requirements and deadlines. When applying for a particular scholarship, think about how you fit the goal or purpose of the scholarship? Who else is likely applying to the scholarship and what will make you stand out from similarly qualified applicants.

If a scholarship requires a letter of recommendation, be sure to ask your recommender early and follow up with a thank you. Consider asking a counselor, teacher, mentor, or even a coach for recommendations; but steer away from asking a close friend or relative.



Searching for scholarships

There are lots of ways to search for scholarships. The institution you are applying to will have some resources to help you find campus-based scholarships. Students can also make use of scholarship search engines. For recommended resources see page 19.

Applying for Scholarships

An essential part of applying for scholarships is the narrative you create for yourself in your application essay. Some questions you might ask in preparation to write your essay are: Who

are you? What are your aspirations? Why do you participate in an activity or organization? Why would this scholarship be meaningful to you?

It is also important to make sure your essay is well organized, and is grammatically correct. We recommend that you have at least one person (or several) proofread your essay and make sure that it represents you well.

Stay open to opportunities

It's important not to limit yourself and search for every opportunity out there. This includes checking with local community organizations, foundations, and employers. Don't limit yourself to only the scholarships with big awards. Getting several smaller scholarships can amount to as much of an award as one big scholarship.

Applying for scholarships can be a lot of work, but can also be very rewarding in the end. Scholarship awards can be used to help pay for things like a laptop, books, dormitory items, and even tuition. It's free money that you don't have to pay back, take advantage of it! Apply early and keep your eyes out for every opportunity. Good luck!

INSIDE THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

by Tiana Otubuah, Assistant Director, Office of Undergraduate Admissions, UC Irvine

We know every student is looking for that “golden” item that will get them admitted into a UC, but the truth is, there’s not just “one” thing that admissions officers consider when reviewing your application. There are a number of items that we value.

In the UC application, we have something called Comprehensive Review. In the Comprehensive Review, grades and test scores are very important, but we also look at you, the applicant, in the midst of many different factors.

Some of these factors (in no particular order) can include, but are not limited to: extracurricular activities, honors and awards, volunteer work or community service, special talents, course rigor in senior year, accomplishments in light of circumstances, work experience, internships, responses to the personal insight questions, and so on.

When we are reading your application, we are looking at all the information you provide in your application. I have personally read thousands (yes, thousands) of applications, and even though it can seem daunting, you have my undivided attention when I am reading your application. We enjoy learning about you even beyond your academic achievements, as the “beyond” gives us a clearer glimpse of you.

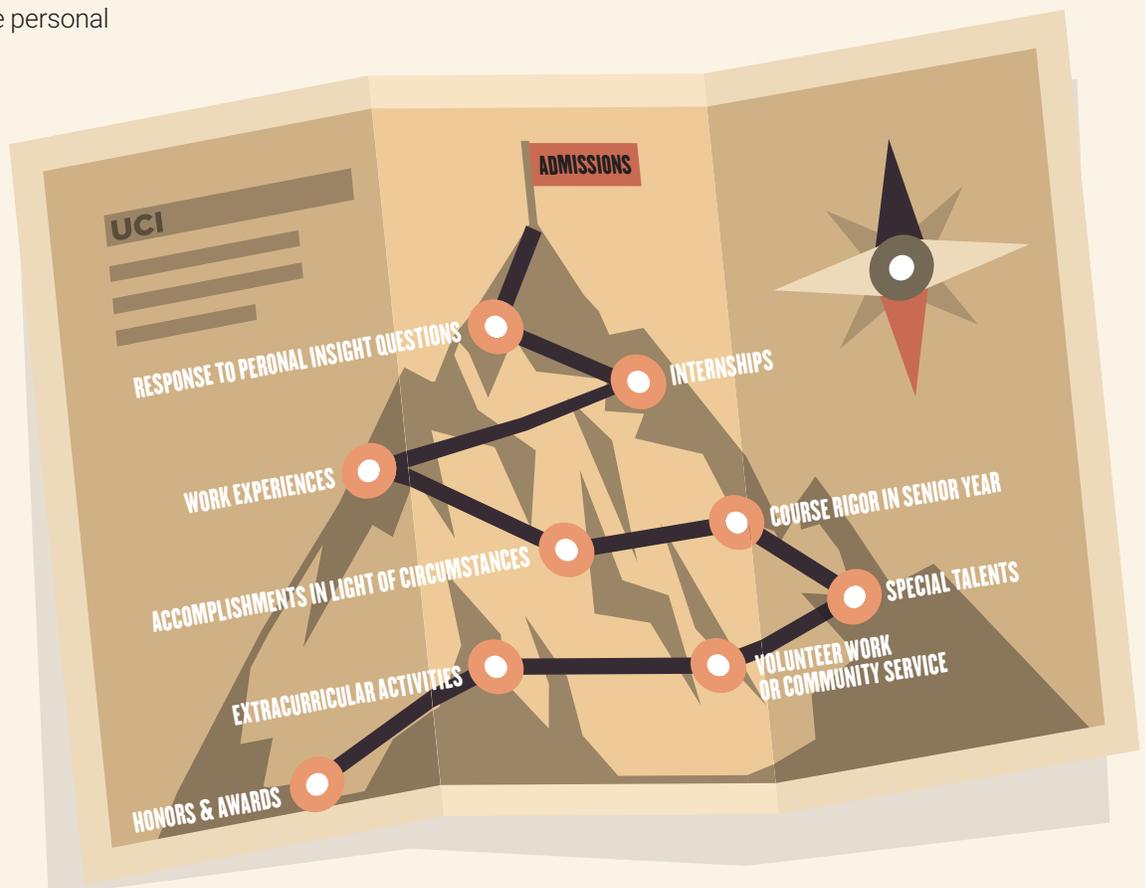
Put yourselves in our shoes. We are complete strangers learning about

you through an application. Just because a student has straight A’s does not mean they will be admitted. In my personal experience, the clear, concise and detailed information within the activities, honors and awards, community service, work experience, and personal insight sections of the application are helpful in connecting the dots for that stranger. The problem that I primarily see with most applicants is that students do not include vital information. Many times, students omit the very items that we could possibly deem wonderful.

For instance, many students do not give themselves credit for all the activities they are involved in. Maybe you help out with a food pantry on the weekends. Perhaps you babysit your neighbor’s children each week or even assist your middle school or an elementary school teacher with their students during your school

breaks. Maybe you created an app for a technology device. Maybe because your school does not have a lot of honors and AP courses, you decided to take courses at a local community college to further challenge yourself. Maybe you are a part of a community acting ensemble that does improvisation. What you include could be a multitude of items; so remember, it is critically important not to sell yourself short. Your items are what make you unique and are very important to us.

In closing, provide as much information as you can. If you have something to include, fill out every section of the application. Do not minimize what you do, and do not fabricate what you do. You are a star in your own right, and should definitely tell us how you shine. Again, there is no “golden” method, format, involvement, word or rhythm. Tell us about you, and that will give us the best information possible.



HOW TO BEST TACKLE THE PERSONAL INSIGHT QUESTIONS

by Paola Sotelo,
Program Coordinator, EAOP, UC Irvine

The personal insight questions are a major component of the UC admission application.

It is not reviewed as a stand-alone part of the application. These are short answer responses about you, the applicant, and should not be looked at as an essay.

There are 8 questions to choose from, yet you only respond to 4. Each response is limited to a maximum of 350 words, and all questions are given equal consideration. Which question you choose to answer is entirely up to you. There is no right or wrong way to answer the prompt, but the content of the personal insight responses should add clarity, richness, and meaning to the information presented in other parts of the UC application. In doing so, this will enable the admissions officer to form the best impression of you.

All of the questions focus on a different topic: Question 1: leadership; Question 2: creativity; Question 3: greatest talent or skill; Question 4: significant educational opportunity or educational barrier; Question 5: most significant challenge; Question 6: academic subject; Question 7: community service; and Question 8: something that makes you stand out.

Make sure that you respond to the four that you are MOST able to relate to. Don't force yourself to answer a question because you think the admissions officer would like to see it answered. Here are a few tips to help guide you in the right direction for your responses.

1. Start Early

To ensure that you have the best responses, you want to start writing early. The UC application opens August 1st which allows ample time to review and refine before the actual submission period which is between November 1st-30th. The earlier you start, the less stress for you later on.

2. Be Personal

This is an absolute MUST. This is why they are called the PERSONAL insight questions. You want to ensure that you are using "I" statements. Admission officers are expecting you to share a story that is unique to YOU. This can be very challenging, but if you take the time to reflect on everything that you have accomplished during your high school career, it can add up!

3. Proofread and Edit

Although the UCs aren't focusing on your grammar, it is essential that you proofread and edit your work. It is nice for an admissions officer to read through your responses and find them to be content-rich with great flow.

4. Solicit Feedback

Soliciting feedback is one of the most important parts of this process. Your first draft of your responses will not be your best, so feedback is necessary. Consider asking your counselors, outreach programs, or teachers to review your work.

5. Relax

After everything we have covered you want to make sure that you relax! The personal insight questions are the most challenging part of the UC application. Once this section is done, the rest is a breeze! It's your Senior year, so don't overstress, and be sure to have fun.

The personal insight questions are your way to give the universities a sense of your personality, your perspective on the world, and some experiences that have made you who you are. The questions touch on many qualities that the admission officers are looking for, put your best foot forward and good luck!

FAMILY SUPPORT THROUGH THE COLLEGE APPLICATION: ADVICE FOR PARENTS

by Erick Espino, Program Coordinator, COSMOS, UC Irvine

The college-going process can be difficult to navigate for all students, especially those who classify as first-generation and/or low income.

Maintaining good standing as a Senior in high school, students have to balance the responsibilities of entrance exams, GPA requirements, A-G completion, applying for Financial Aid, choosing a school and a major, and many other factors that can be a lot to handle without any support.

There are many strategies that you, as a parent, can use to best support your child during the application season. Whether your child is just beginning their high school career, or currently working on their college applications, it is very important to keep in mind how important your support is during this time.

Important things to keep in mind while helping your child navigate this process are:

Remember it is their college education, not yours

While the commitment to attending a university might be a family decision, the journey your child is about to embark upon is their own. Be supportive of your child's interest and do not disregard them because they do not align with your own.

Be aware of major deadlines, both system-wide, and for each individual institution

Deadlines will probably be one of the easiest things for your child to forget when managing components of the application process. Be sure to keep a calendar noting all major deadlines, along with those that correspond to particular institutions of choice.

You can always check back to our college timeline on page 8, but here are some major deadlines to keep an early eye on:

- ▶ UC and CSU Application Deadline: November 30th, 2018
- ▶ FAFSA/ Dream Act Deadline: March 2nd
- ▶ Statement of Intent to Register (SIR): May 1st

Other deadlines to keep in mind:

- ▶ Housing Deadlines
- ▶ Official Transcript submission
- ▶ EOP and other support program applications
- ▶ Requested Supplemental information

Take a trip and tour college campuses during breaks

One of the most useful steps when narrowing down school choices is visiting the campuses of your interest. Not only do you get to see what the college climate is like, but your child can see if the campus is the right fit for them for the next four years.

Encourage your child to get involved in community service and extracurricular activities

This pertains more to students who are in their early high school years. As college admissions continue to get tougher each year, they are looking for a well-rounded pool of applicants. Encourage your child to get involved in a sport or club, or maybe even explore options that are available to them within the community.

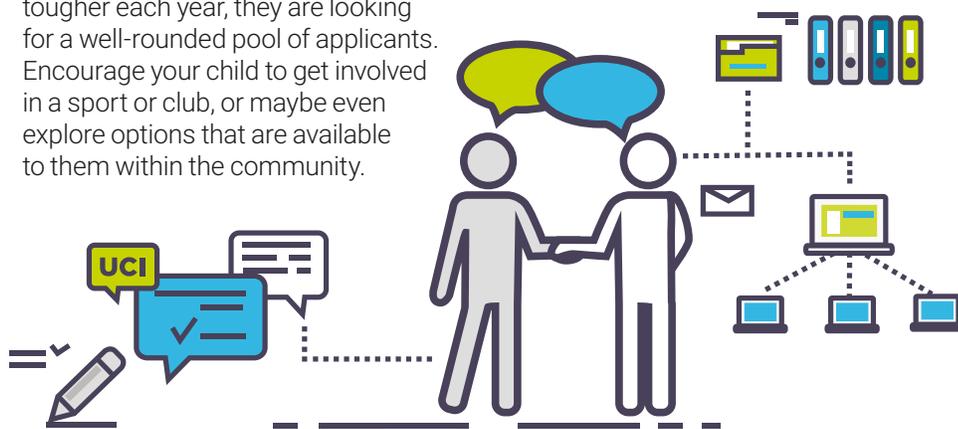
If you went to college, forget what it was like when you applied

The application process can change from year to year. Institutions may be looking for something different each academic cycle, so it is very important to keep up to date with any changes in the application process.

Be patient and provide the necessary support when needed

The college process is overwhelming for many students and the last thing they need is added pressure. Provide support by researching or getting informed through school events such as college fairs, cash for college nights, and open application labs. There may be a great deal of support at your child's school that they, or maybe even you, may not be aware of, so make sure to keep informed.

Keep in mind that the college-going process will be different for each individual, and therefore for each family. What is most important to remember is that your child will need guidance from counselors, teachers, and advisors, but most importantly they need family support during this exciting journey!



YOU MADE IT! NOW WHAT?

by Tony Hwang, *Interim Executive Director, Office of Undergraduate Admissions, UC Irvine*

As an admissions director, one of the best parts of my job is admitting students to UCI. While most students tend to think admissions officers like to “deny” students, in reality, we actually like saying “yes” to students. But as much as we dislike saying “no,” there is something we dislike even more, and that’s having to take back an offer of admission from someone we recently admitted.

You may be thinking, why would we take back an offer of admission? The answer is, all offers of admissions are provisional, meaning the offers are conditional.

What are the conditions? The conditions may vary slightly from college to college, but they are always included your admissions packet. Students should read their admissions offer carefully once they are admitted. Don’t just stop reading after the first sentence congratulating you on your offer of admission.

All admitted students will have a checklist of things you must do and provide in order to meet the conditions of the provisional admission offer. This checklist will be included in the admissions packet as well as be displayed on the web portal. For the UC, the standard things would be:

- ▶ Official transcripts
- ▶ Official test scores
- ▶ Maintain a good GPA in your senior year

There may be other things depending on the college you are admitted to, these are just a few.

Review the checklist CAREFULLY. There are required items attached to your provisional admission offer. This means, if any of these items are missing or conditions are not met, your admissions offer can be rescinded. The reason we ask for the things we ask for from you is because they are vital to the admission process. So remember, admissions officers absolutely hate having to take back an offer of admission.

Another notable thing to keep in mind and to always be on top of are all the deadlines associated with the checklist. In general, there are a few important deadlines after the offer of admission:

- ▶ Statement of Intent to Register (SIR)
- ▶ Housing application
- ▶ Summer orientation
- ▶ Placement testing
- ▶ July 1: High School Transcripts
- ▶ July 15: Official Test Scores

Once you have accepted an offer of admission from a college, you should think of yourself as a student there. Know that it is the job of the college to ensure you will successfully enroll in the fall. If you have any difficulty meeting any deadlines or getting documents, contact your assigned counselor, and they will be able to assist you.

In short, it is your job to get us what we need by when we need it, and it is our job to make sure you successfully enroll and start your college experience in the fall. So while getting admitted to the college of your dreams is an incredible achievement, that doesn’t mean you can take your foot off the pedal and coast through the final months of high school.



YES!

HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY NAVIGATE TRANSFERRING FROM A COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO A UC

by Nancy Arteaga, Program Coordinator, Transfer Prep Program, UC Irvine

California community colleges are known for their low-cost tuition and for being convenient institutions of higher education that offer students vocational training and workforce focused skill development.

As universities become increasingly selective, more traditional four-year bound students are considering California community colleges as a first step towards their university of choice.

As a senior in high school, it is important to understand that when considering a California community college as a first step towards a UC, knowledge of support services and tools designed to aid in the transfer process exist and need to be sought out! Here are a few suggested resources:

Transfer Admissions Planner

uctap.universityofcalifornia.edu

The Transfer Admissions Planner (UC TAP) is an online tool exclusive to community college students. The UC TAP can be used from the very beginning of a student's time at a college to keep track of their courses. The UC TAP, combined with meeting regularly with transfer and academic counselors, is a great resource to remain on top of the requirements to transfer to a UC. It also allows for UC staff to have direct contact with community college students so that important information pertaining to the transfer process is communicated. The UC TAP is the preliminary step to completing the UC TAG.

Transfer Admission Guarantee

First-time community college students can ensure their admission to specific UC campuses and majors by participating in the Transfer Admission Guarantee (TAG). Six of the nine undergraduate University of California campuses offer the Transfer Admission Guarantee: Irvine, Davis, Merced, Riverside, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz.

TAG allows for students in the various stages of the transfer process to get early review of their academic transcripts. The TAG application is due every year by September 30th and is an additional application to the system-wide UC application. TAG requires students complete a set minimum of transferable units and courses as well as maintain the eligible TAG GPA.

Maximize Your Resources

Community college can be a chance for a fresh start. To remain competitive for transfer, students should keep a high GPA as well as be involved in extracurricular activities, learning communities, honors programs, and participate in programs with articulation agreements with UC campuses that offer a direct pathway for transfer.

Many community colleges have supported students by becoming an alternative for those who may not have academically excelled in high school or for those who were not offered admission to their top university of choice.



COLLEGE COMPARISON WORKSHEET

by Cesar Beccera, Executive Assistant, Center for Educational Partnerships, UC Irvine

Getting admitted into a university is an incredible accomplishment! After you and your family celebrate, it's important that you select the BEST college that fits YOU. Use this worksheet to help you compare the various colleges you are interested in attending. You may want to make additional copies if you are considering more than three.

UNIVERSITY NAME			
LOCATION Distance from home			
SIZE Number of Enrolled Students The physical size of the campus			
ENVIRONMENT School setting (URBAN, RURAL) Diversity			
ACADEMICS Your Major offered Transfer credits allowed Student to Professor class ratio Research opportunities			
COLLEGE EXPENSES Total tuition cost Books and supplies			
HOUSING Estimated cost of room & board Type & Size Meal plan Deposit			
TOTAL GIFT AID Grants (Cal & Pell Grant) offered Scholarships Work study opportunities			
NET COST Federal loans (subsidized & unsubsidized) Parent's Expected Family Contribution			
UNDERGRADUATE RESOURCES Internship opportunities Study Abroad opportunities Mentorship opportunities			
ACTIVITIES Clubs, Student Organizations, Athletics/ Intramurals			
CAMPUS VISITS When? What did you like about this campus? Dislikes?			

HELPFUL INTERNET RESOURCES

College Searches	www.californiacolleges.edu https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search https://www2.calstate.edu/apply https://petersons.com/college-search.aspx
CollegeBoard (SAT/AP exams)	https://www.collegeboard.org/
ACT	http://www.act.org/
SAT	https://collegereadiness.collegeboard.org/sat/register
UC Application	http://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/
CSU Application	https://www2.calstate.edu/apply
Common Application	https://www.commonapp.org/
Community College	https://home.cccapply.org/
UC Approved Course List	https://www.ucop.edu/agguide/
Financial Aid & Scholarship Searches	https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/fafsa https://www.fastweb.com/ https://www.scholarships.com/ http://www.icanaffordcollege.com/ http://www.finaid.org/ http://www.scholarshipexperts.com https://www.salliemae.com/college-planning/ https://brokescholar.com/ https://www.hsf.net/
Undocumented Student Resources	https://dream.csac.ca.gov/ http://admission.universityofcalifornia.edu/paying-for-uc/whats-available/ca-dream-act/index.html https://www2.calstate.edu/attend/student-services/resources-for-undocumented-students
Homework Help	https://app.grammarly.com/ https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html https://scholar.google.com.au/ https://www.wolframalpha.com/





David, Destination Graduation Student
Westminster High School, Class of 2017

DOING MORE™ FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Orange County United Way is dedicated to providing local responses to the most pressing, interconnected challenges we face. We help struggling students graduate and prepare for career success; provide access to healthy food and healthcare; close the poverty gap; and provide access to stable housing to prevent future homelessness.

Doing More is only possible with your help.
JOIN US.



UnitedWayOC.org

UCI Center for Educational Partnerships

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Helpful
Internet
Resources



www.cfep.uci.edu/theedge/online-resources

UCI School of Education